

erence to "the true leading star" is a pun on Leyster's name; see Hofrichter 1989, 13.

3. Illustrated in Raupp 1984, 390, repro. 20.

4. Ripa 1644, 259. "Konstigh en eedel wort hy gekleet, om dat de konst door haer selven eedel is, die men oock de tweede Natuyre kan heeten." For a discussion of this type of self-portraiture, see Raupp 1984, 36–38.

5. For example, Hals' *Isaac Abrabamsz. Massa*, 1626, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, inv. no. 54/31, illustrated in Slive 1970–1974, 2: pl. 64. Although the National Gallery's work was given to Judith Leyster in 1926, many scholars attributed it to Frans Hals during the 1930s (see Exhibited and References).

6. Hofrichter 1983, 106–109. For the guild regulations, see Tavern 1972–1973, 52.

7. A similar style collar is seen in family portraits of the late 1620s, such as Pieter de Grebber's *Family Portrait at a Meal*, 1625 (Stedelijk Museum, Alkmaar); Paulus Bor's *Portrait of the Family Van Vanevelt*, 1628 (Sint Pietersen Blokland Gasthuis, Amersfoort); and Andries van Bochoven's *The Artist and His Family*, 1629 (Centraal Museum, Utrecht). These paintings are illustrated in Haarlem 1986, nos. 72, 74, 75.

8. For example, *Young Flute Player* (inv. no. 1120); see Hofrichter 1989, no. 38.

9. See, for example, Catharina van Hemessen's *Self-Portrait* of 1548 (see note 3).

10. As suggested by Hofrichter 1983, 107.

11. For a discussion of the symbolic implications of the violin player see Raupp 1984, 346–347.

References

1928 Valentiner: 238–247, repro.

- 1930 Gratama: 71–75, repro.
1930 Dülberg: 42, 41 repro.
1933 Rich: 372–381, repro.
1937 Rich: 130–137.
1937 Trivas: 227–231, repro.
1963 Van Hall: 187, nos. 2, 5.
1965 NGA: 75, no. 1050.
1968 NGA: 66, repro.
1970–1974 Slive, 3 (1974): 152–153.
1971 Grimm: 146–178, repro. 146, 148.
1973 Iskin: 4–14.
1974 Tufts: 71, repro.
1974 Montagni: 113, no. 249, repro. (also French ed. 1976).
1975 Munsterberg: 26–27, repro.
1975 NGA: 194, no. 1050, repro. 195.
1975 Walker: 287, no. 382, repro.
1976 Nochlin and Harris: 139.
1976/1977 Daniëls: 329–341, repro. 340.
1983 Hofrichter: 106–109, repro. nos. 1, 3.
1984 Raupp: 346–347.
1984 Philadelphia: 234–235, repro.
1985 NGA: 227, repro.
1986 Sutton: 309.
1987 Heller: 213, note 20.
1987 Schama: 415–416, repro. no. 196.
1988 Wheelock: 214–245, figs. 9–19, 9–20, 9–21.
1989 Hofrichter: 15, 24, 51–53, no. 21, pls. 21, 55, 56, 57, color plate x.
1990 Grimm: 238–239, fig. 127b (detail) (also 1990 English trans.: 238–239).

Nicolaes Maes

1634–1693

MAES WAS BORN in Dordrecht in January 1634, the son of a well-to-do soap boiler.¹ The details and dates of his early career are not precisely known, but Houbraken tells us that Maes' first instruction in drawing came from "an ordinary master" (*een gemeen Meester*), probably locally in Dordrecht. At some point in the late 1640s, however, he went to Amsterdam and studied with Rembrandt (q.v.), becoming one of the master's most accomplished pupils.

By the end of 1653, Maes was back in Dordrecht, where he was betrothed on 28 December to Adriana Brouwers, the widow of a preacher. They were married there on 13 January 1654, and had three children (one of whom died young). The influence of Rembrandt, and specifically the style and subject matter of his work of the 1640s, continued in Maes' work after his return to Dordrecht. This influence is espe-

cially strong in the case of his drawings, which are often difficult to distinguish with certainty from those of Rembrandt. Maes produced almost all of his small-scale paintings of domestic interiors during the mid-1650s, one of the two types of picture for which he is best known.

By 1656, Maes began painting portraits, and eventually he became exclusively a fashionable portrait painter. He sought to infuse his depictions of Dutch merchants with an elegance comparable to that found in paintings by Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641), and Houbraken relates that Maes actually traveled to Antwerp to study the works of Flemish masters. His own portraits, however, always retained a more literal likeness of the sitter than did those of Van Dyck.

Houbraken attributed the stylistic changes evi-

dent in Maes' painting during the 1660s to market pressure, saying that Maes abandoned Rembrandt's way of painting "when he took up portraiture and discovered that young ladies would rather be painted in white than in brown." At this time, Maes not only altered his style, but also completely changed his signature from block letters to a more elegant form. Were it not for the existence of transitional paintings signed in the earlier manner but showing signs of the artist's later style, we might well conclude that the late portraits were painted by an entirely different N. Maes.

In 1673 Maes moved to Amsterdam, where he died in December 1693.

Notes

1. Houbraken reported that Maes was born in 1632, but a Dordrecht archivist discovered the correct date: see Martin 1942, 512, note 325.

Bibliography

Houbraken 1753, 2: 273–277.
 Veth 1890.
 HdG 1907–1927, 6 (1916): 473–605.
 Valentiner 1924.
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 Philadelphia 1984: 239–242.
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1937.1.63 (63)

An Old Woman Dozing over a Book

c. 1655
 Oil on canvas, 82.2 x 67 (32³/₈ x 26³/₈)
 Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Inscriptions

At upper right above keys: *N. MAES*

Technical Notes: The support, a medium-weight, plain-woven fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping visible along all edges indicates the original dimensions have been retained. A long horizontal tear in the book is slightly depressed. A smooth off-white ground application was followed by a dark imprimatura layer, applied overall and incorporated into the background.

Paint was applied thinly in all but the flesh tones with low impasto in light passages and transparent glazing in the darks. Wet-into-wet blending softens the edges of the controlled brushstrokes. The proper right hand and proper left side of the face are severely abraded and awkwardly retouched. The signature is reinforced. A thick, matte, discolored varnish covers the surface. No conservation has been carried out since acquisition.

Provenance: Anonymous sale, Worcester, in 1856; Thomas Grove Smith [d. 1879], Rashwood House, Droitwich, Worcestershire; by inheritance to his son, Herbert George Smith [d. 1918], Apsey House, Batheaston, Somerset;¹ (Arthur J. Sulley & Co., London, in 1919). (Possibly with Thomas Agnew & Sons, London, c. 1920).² Nils B. Hersloff, Baltimore, and East Orange, New Jersey, by 1933; (consigned to M. Knoedler & Co., New York, April 1933–May 1934 and January 1935–April 1936);³ purchased 16 April 1936 by The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.

Exhibited: *Autumn Exhibition*, Victoria Art Gallery, Bath, 1900, no. 41. *Exhibition of Twenty Masterpieces (1400–1800) in Aid of King George V's Jubilee Trust*, M. Knoedler & Co., London, 1935, no. 10. *Bilder des Alters*, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig, 1993–1994, no. 44, repro.

SEATED AT A TABLE in a darkened room, an old woman leans her head on the back of her hand, having fallen asleep over her book. Her right hand, which is vaguely distinguishable in the shadow, rests on the book and holds her reading spectacles. Hanging from a nail in the molding on the wall to her left are three large keys. The mood of the painting is somber and quiet. The light that falls on her face from the upper left also illuminates the keys, book, and red tablecloth, but most of her body and background are thrown into deep shadow.

Maes explored the theme of a sleeping woman a number of times in the mid-1650s, shortly after he left Rembrandt's studio. Invariably these paintings have an admonitory character, for the woman is always shown sleeping instead of fulfilling her duties and responsibilities. In *The Idle Servant* of 1655 (National Gallery, London, inv. no. 207), Maes made his point by having a gesturing woman point out the irresponsible servant to the viewer.⁴ Dirty pots and pans lie at the woman's feet, and behind her a cat steals a chicken. As if the point needed reinforcement, Maes also placed the sleeping maid in a pose that was well known as a representation of Acedia (Sloth) (fig. 1). He clearly intended to convey a comparable message in his representations of women sleeping over their books, particularly when the book was the Bible, as is the case here.

The identification of the book as a Bible can be made through comparison with a related painting in Brussels (fig. 2), in which this same Bible lies opened to the first page of the Book of Amos. Throughout most of this text the Lord describes how he will no longer overlook the misdemeanors of the Israelites and intends to punish them like anyone else. Reinforcing the message that the woman's behavior cannot be condoned is the fact that her lacemaking, a symbol of domestic virtue, also goes unattended.⁵